

COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF SCRANTON

HELD:

Tuesday, January 19th, 2021

LOCATION:

VIA ZOOM

Maria McCool, RPR

Official Court Reporter

C O U N C I L     M E M B E R S :

WILLIAM GAUGHAN, PRESIDENT

KYLE DONAHUE, VICE PRESIDENT

MARK MCANDREW

JESSICA ROTHCHILD

THOMAS SCHUSTER

LORI REED, CITY CLERK

KATHY CARRERA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

KEVIN HAYES, COUNCIL SOLICITOR

(Pledge of Allegiance.)

MR. GAUGHAN: Please remain standing for a moment of silent reflection for our service men and women throughout the world and also for those who have passed away recently in our community.

Let us also take a moment of silence for all of the people in our community, country and world who have passed away from the coronavirus. This pandemic has turned our world upsidedown. But we must remain hopeful and strong.

We continue to pray for the doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. May they have protection and peace.

Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, let us stick together, endure together, mourn together and in place of our anxiety, let us have hope and peace. Thank you. Miss Carrera, roll call, please.

MS. CARRERA: Mr. Schuster.

1 MR. SCHUSTER: Present.

2 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McAndrew.

3 MR. MCANDREW: Present.

4 MS. CARRERA: Dr. Rothchild.

5 DR. ROTHCHILD: Here.

6 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

7 MR. DONAHUE: Here.

8 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

9 MR. GAUGHAN: Here. Thank you, Miss  
10 Carrera. Mrs. Reed, would you please dispense  
11 with the reading of the minutes?

12 MS. REED: Thank you. THIRD ORDER.

13 3-A. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FROM  
14 OECD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DATED JANUARY 10, 2021  
15 REGARDING COUNCIL INQUIRY OF OECD 2021 PAVING  
16 PROGRAM.

17 3-B. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FROM  
18 THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR DATED JANUARY 11, 2021  
19 REGARDING FINANCIAL TRANSACTION FEES FOR CITY  
20 OF SCRANTON 2021 TRAN.

21 3-C. CHECK RECEIVED FROM HARRISON  
22 HOUSE PERSONAL CARE HOME DATED JANUARY 14, 2021  
23 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$500.00 WHICH IS PAYMENT IN  
24 LIEU OF TAXES.

25 3-D. CITY OF SCRANTON AGGREGATE

1 PENSION FUND COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT  
2 FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2018 TO DECEMBER 31,  
3 2019.

4 3-E. MINUTES OF THE HISTORICAL  
5 ARCHITECTURE REVIEW BOARD MEETING HELD OCTOBER  
6 8, 2020.

7 3-F. SINGLE TAX OFFICE CITY FUNDS  
8 DISTRIBUTED COMPARISON REPORT 2019-2020 YEAR TO  
9 DATE DECEMBER 31, 2020.

10 3-G. CONTROLLER'S REPORT FOR THE  
11 MONTH ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2020.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Mrs. Reed.  
13 Are there any comments on any of the Third  
14 Order items?

15 MR. SCHUSTER: Yes, Mr. Gaughan, in  
16 regard to Item 3-B, the correspondence was sent  
17 over to the Mayor to ask questions about the  
18 bond counsel fee for the transaction. I did  
19 receive -- we did receive this -- the response  
20 to that.

21 But looking at the response, it  
22 doesn't answer any of the questions that were  
23 asked. So I did send an e-mail to Lori  
24 earlier in the day. I'm going to ask that she  
25 resend this letter that the administration can

1           actually address the questions that were asked.

2           MR. GAUGHAN:   Okay.   Thank you.

3           MR. SCHUSTER:   Thank you.

4           MR. GAUGHAN:   Any other comments on  
5           the Third Order items?   If not, received and  
6           filed.   Do any Council members have any  
7           announcements at this time?

8           MR. MCANDREW:   I do.   I have a nice  
9           announcement.   This announcement is -- it's a  
10          fundraiser.   It's from Cosmo's Cheesesteaks  
11          over in South Side.   Their announcement or  
12          their fundraiser is in loving memory of Steven  
13          Sunday, Scranton Firefighter who recently  
14          passed away.

15          Starting today which was yesterday,  
16          Cosmo's Cheesesteaks will be offering a choice  
17          between their three best selling cheesesteaks,  
18          the Rodeo, Mozzarella Bomb and then chicken,  
19          bacon and ranch.   A portion of the proceeds  
20          from each of these hoagies sold will go towards  
21          the purchase of equipment and/or materials  
22          needed at the Scranton City Firehouse in  
23          Steven's honor.   This is great.   That's all I  
24          have.   Thank you.

25          MR. GAUGHAN:   Thank you.   Anyone

1           else have any announcements?

2                   DR. ROTHCHILD: Yes, I do. I have  
3           two. I'm just trying to find information on  
4           the one that I wanted to bring up. So for the  
5           first time there's -- there are a couple of  
6           organizations, nonprofits that are putting  
7           together a Scranton Ice Festival.

8                   And they're looking to hold this the  
9           first week of February, February 5th, 6th and  
10          7th in downtown Scranton. And they're trying  
11          to get like our local businesses involved in a,  
12          you know, they're going to have ice sculptures  
13          down there.

14                  And it sounds like it will be a  
15          pretty fun event to attend. And it will be  
16          outdoors so COVID safe. And if anyone is  
17          interested in participating in it or any small  
18          businesses that want to be a part of it, they  
19          have a Facebook page called Scranton Ice  
20          Festival with the event information and contact  
21          information up there.

22                  And maybe we can provide some more  
23          of that too. But I thought that was something  
24          that was pretty neat and different for our  
25          area. And I hope it's helpful in getting

1 people out a little bit and in the community  
2 and supporting our local businesses.

3 And then the other announcement I  
4 had it's been around the news a lot today, you  
5 know, the national news. I just wanted to  
6 congratulate Dr. Rachael Levine on her  
7 nomination. So incoming President Joe Biden is  
8 going to nominate her as the Assistant Health  
9 Secretary.

10 She's currently serving as our State  
11 Health Secretary. And I feel that she's done a  
12 really incredible job in that position given  
13 what we've gone through this past year with the  
14 pandemic. I think a lot of people look up to  
15 her. But the nomination also is going to be  
16 very historic.

17 She will be the highest ranking  
18 transgender official in our country. So it's  
19 really unprecedented to -- well, I think the  
20 Obama Administration had -- did have some  
21 transgender individuals as part of his  
22 administration but not as high ranking as this.

23 So it's really a big moment for the  
24 LGBTQ community. And I just wanted to  
25 recognize that. And I also had the pleasure of



1 personally knowing Dr. Levine for about 10  
2 years now. And it's just been great to watch  
3 her successes and to see her now in this  
4 federal level helping us out nationally. Thank  
5 you.

6 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you very much.  
7 Does anyone have any announcements? Okay.  
8 Very good. Mrs. Reed? We lost Lori. Lori,  
9 are you there?

10 MS. REED: Oh, I apologize. I'm  
11 sorry. FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS PARTICIPATION.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: At this time would  
13 someone please make a motion to accept public  
14 comment from the following individuals: Marie  
15 Schumacher and Dave Dobrzyn.

16 MR. DONAHUE: I make a motion to  
17 accept public comment.

18 DR. ROTHCHILD: Second.

19 MR. GAUGHAN: There's been a motion  
20 and a second to accept public comment. Mrs.  
21 Reed, would you please read the comments into  
22 the record?

23 MS. REED: Thank you. The first  
24 submission is from Marie Schumacher as follows:

25 0 When I access the City website I

1 get a Chrome notice the site is "Dangerous Not  
2 secure or Dangerous" Why is the City's website  
3 not secure?

4 0 On the good news side, there were  
5 only eighteen total properties in Lackawanna  
6 County, two of which were in Scranton, listed  
7 for the February 5 2021 Sheriff' sale.

8 0 When may we expect collection of  
9 delinquent trash fees to product revenue.

10 0 When will the 2019 Audit be  
11 available to the public.

12 0 How much revenue do we expect  
13 from 5E? Is there a separate account for this  
14 revenue?

15 0 Has Council ever considered  
16 asking Departments to develop metrics for the  
17 year? I believe it would be good for the  
18 employee and the taxpayers. Perhaps each  
19 Councilman could give a report on progress at  
20 Meetings.

21 0 Will HUD funded road paving (low  
22 and moderate-income zones) be the only paving  
23 done again this year.

24 0 When is a final Report expected  
25 from HRG.

1 MS. REED: The second submission is  
2 from Dave Dobrzyn as follows:

3 I would like to suggest council  
4 support for mayor the current holder of the  
5 office PAIGE COGNETTI. Scranton has not in my  
6 opinion had a suitable mayor since JAMES  
7 CONNER, Reforms have been tried time and again  
8 and the results have been poor at best, Debts  
9 have increased and became stranded; promises  
10 have been made during campaigns ie no sale of  
11 sewer plant parking is an atrocity in central  
12 city; needless to mention the last  
13 administration although I feel the sentence was  
14 quite excessive.

15 Moving on I would appreciate better  
16 information on trash policies on both billing  
17 and collections, Over the years I have  
18 witnessed speakers advocating per bag and later  
19 pining over families ability to pay for volume;  
20 advocating non removal; the facts are most of  
21 the fee is probably used up by the time your  
22 haulers are at your door for equipment wages  
23 fuel insurance and facilities, Recycling is  
24 poor at best and we need more attention to  
25 percentage, Please give more attention to last

1 suggestions of scrapping glass and separating  
2 plastic and cans, currently there is a lawsuit  
3 against the county men were held in slave like  
4 conditions for a whole year over a 2500 dollar  
5 arrears in child support at a cost to taxpayers  
6 of \$22500 figure for incarceration until paid,  
7 My suggestion would be to pay the support from  
8 state funds and place a lien against the owing  
9 parties and save the remainder similar to  
10 student loan collections ie for life until  
11 paid. It makes little sense to subsidize a  
12 recycling center with even job loss or medical  
13 issues and leave the taxpayers on the hook for  
14 both jailing and possible court settlements if  
15 we lose. Any questions on this issue could be  
16 answered by BRIAN FULTON archives at TIMES  
17 TRIBUNE.

18 Finally I am requesting the  
19 ordinances and the and collection policies  
20 currently governing trash and hopefully I will  
21 not see huge breaks for landlords at my  
22 expanded liability, Our bill has been paid for  
23 18 years with time to spare and some other  
24 trash or bill is not welcome here, I will send  
25 an e-mail to the county with my opinion in the

1 near future with these same suggestions, please  
2 note prior suggestions on recycling mail  
3 response to address above.  
4

5 (Concludes public comment letters as  
6 submitted to Council.)  
7

8 MS. REED: And that is all.

9 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Mrs. Reed.  
10 On the question? On the question, just a few  
11 things. So first, I just want to respond to  
12 Miss Schumacher's questions related to the  
13 legislation from last week. And these  
14 questions were regarding the legislation that  
15 had to do with the OECD Act.

16 So let me just take a minute and  
17 respond to those. And this comes from the  
18 Director of OECD, Eileen Cipriani. She stated  
19 that St. Joseph's does provide income  
20 verification. Historically, the City has not  
21 been able to fully fund St. Joseph's request  
22 except for 2020.

23 St. Joseph's is very effective and  
24 efficient in spending the down the CDBG funding  
25 and provides an important service to the

1 community. While St. Joseph's as a nonprofit  
2 is open to a larger portion, OECD-HUD funding  
3 can only be used for low to moderate income  
4 individuals.

5 In response to the father question,  
6 only women and children are housed at St.  
7 Joseph's. However, counseling and case  
8 management are available to a broader  
9 population including fathers as part of the  
10 program and aid with developing healthy  
11 relationships. So hopefully that answers Miss  
12 Schumacher's questions about St. Joseph's.

13 She also asks how many loan to grant  
14 loans have there been or loan to grant items.  
15 Mrs. Cipriani said there have been eight  
16 business loan to grants. Six have been  
17 converted to grants and closed; two are in the  
18 process.

19 Miss Schumacher also questioned why  
20 the City passed legislation -- it was 7-C last  
21 week working with a company as kind of a  
22 passthrough for some of these grants or for  
23 some of this money that's going out to small  
24 businesses.

25 Eileen responded that neither OECD

1           nor the City has the technology, capacity to  
2           receive and track a high volume of documents  
3           simultaneously.

4                       By the nature of these grants, most  
5           applications are submitted in a very small way.  
6           So I want to thank Mrs. Cipriani for responding  
7           to those questions. I want to thank  
8           Mr. Dobrzyn for his comments. And then I know  
9           Miss Schumacher asked quite a few questions.

10                      So I just want to check through some  
11           of the ones I think I know the answers off the  
12           top of my head. The first one was a comment  
13           about the City's website about it being  
14           dangerous and not secure, some kind of popup.  
15           Mrs. Reed, if you could just forward that along  
16           to the IT Department and make them aware of  
17           that.

18                      I'm not sure if it's an issue on the  
19           City's end or potentially on Miss Schumacher's  
20           end. Miss Schumacher also asked when may we  
21           expect collection of delinquent trash fees to  
22           produce revenue? Council was reported  
23           extensively in the month of December received  
24           legislation from the administration to hire a  
25           delinquent refuse collector.

1                   We went through a process in doing  
2                   our due diligence. And in reviewing the  
3                   contract we made several changes to it or  
4                   suggestions -- suggested changes. Those are  
5                   now with the City Law Department and the Mayor.  
6                   And we have not received anything to date  
7                   although last week I believe the Mayor said  
8                   that we should be expecting legislation soon  
9                   from her administration in choosing a  
10                  delinquent refuse collector.

11                  So I'm expecting that within the  
12                  next week or two. When will the 2019 audit be  
13                  available to the public? The last update that  
14                  we received from Kohanski and Company was on  
15                  the agenda in Third Order.

16                  And, Mrs. Reed, if you could check  
17                  again with the Business Administrator and  
18                  Kohanski. I was under the impression that it  
19                  would be very soon. There was one outstanding  
20                  item that needed to be checked off the list.

21                  How much revenue can we expect from  
22                  agenda Item 5-E and is there a separate account  
23                  for this revenue? I did send an e-mail to  
24                  Mrs. Reed earlier when I got Miss Schumacher's  
25                  comments. And we will have that information



1 before final passage.

2 I don't know off the top of my head  
3 how much revenue comes in -- work has come from  
4 this item of 5-E in the past. And I don't know  
5 if it's a separate account the revenue goes  
6 into or if it just gets rolled into the Fire  
7 Department budget.

8 Will HUD-funded road paving be the  
9 only paving done again this year? No. It's my  
10 understanding that there will be two paving  
11 projects, one which I think I reported on last  
12 week or the week before in the amount of  
13 700-and some thousand dollars. That will be  
14 the HUD paving project. And then there will  
15 also be a DPW led paving project as well.

16 We will have those two going on. I  
17 don't know if they'll be at the same time, but  
18 they'll be in the spring and summer months.  
19 And I know that the DPW Director is working on  
20 the paving project with DPW.

21 And finally, when is the final  
22 report expected from HRG? And that will be the  
23 company that was assisting the City in  
24 stormwater management. I will have to go back  
25 and look at what they had told us a few months

1           ago when we had them in to give us an update.

2                   I believe they told us this spring.

3           I can't remember off the top of my head. So  
4           I'll have to go back and look at that and I'll  
5           get that answer to Miss Schumacher. And I  
6           think that should cover it. Anyone else on the  
7           question?

8                   MR. GAUGHAN: All those in favor  
9           signify by saying aye.

10                  MR. SCHUSTER: Aye.

11                  MR. MCANDREW: Aye.

12                  MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

13                  DR. ROTHCHILD: Aye.

14                  MR. GAUGHAN: Aye. Opposed? The  
15           eyes have it and so moved.

16                  MS. REED: FIFTH ORDER. 5A.  
17           MOTIONS.

18                  MR. GAUGHAN: Councilman Schuster,  
19           any motions or comments tonight?

20                  MR. SCHUSTER: No, nothing at this  
21           time.

22                  MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Councilman  
23           McAndrew, do you have any motions or comments  
24           at this time?

25                  MR. MCANDREW: I do. An issue's

1           been brought to my attention by a bunch of  
2           concerned residents, all right. They reside on  
3           Rundle Street and Watson Street in West  
4           Scranton.

5                       Of course, you know, before I even  
6           start, they realize that they don't own the  
7           road or the street with regards to parking.  
8           But there's a car lot on 1218 South Main  
9           Avenue, right, it's called Affordable Luxury  
10          Auto. I'm familiar with this car lot. I grew  
11          up in this neighborhood.

12                      You know, they used to have eight or  
13          nine cars on it for sale. And they also rent a  
14          service garage which is two doors down on 1350  
15          South Main Avenue. There's no visible sign.  
16          So I don't know what the name of it is. But  
17          there are cars everywhere.

18                      You know, they're parked on the car  
19          lot itself, three or four deep. You can't even  
20          pull it out to take it for a test drive. So  
21          it's very -- it's very concerning to me. And  
22          also they park three doors down where the  
23          service garage is but there's cars on top of  
24          cars on top of cars, right?

25                      And the biggest concern of the

1 residents is like they said, you known, they  
2 don't own the street. But in front of their  
3 houses this extends to in front of their houses  
4 on both Rundle and Watson, multiple cars, out  
5 of state plates in every disarray or -- the  
6 cars are inoperable. I don't know if they are  
7 illegal.

8 So they're parked everywhere. What  
9 else? They are all in disrepair. All I would  
10 like, Mrs. Reed, if you could please just, you  
11 know, send this correspondence down to the LIPS  
12 Department and check it out because it doesn't  
13 look right. I drove by today. And even the  
14 alley between Watson -- no, I'm sorry, between  
15 Rundle and this garage, there's just cars  
16 sticking out everywhere.

17 Behind the garage there is probably  
18 40 cars that shouldn't even be there. I think  
19 it's a safety issue. I think it needs to be  
20 looked at. Like I said, these cars are from  
21 various stages of disrepair from different  
22 states with different (audio interruption.)

23 MR. GAUGHAN: Mark, we lost you.  
24 Unless you're trying to fake out us -- no, I  
25 think he froze. Mark, I'm sorry we lost you

1 the last couple seconds of your --

2 ATTY. HAYES: Hacked again.

3 MR. MCANDREW: Of course you did.

4 Miss Schumacher, I know what you mean with  
5 this -- with the internet and the technology  
6 here. I hope you heard everything. If not,  
7 Mrs. Reed, I will, you know, I'll summarize it  
8 in an e-mail. But please send some  
9 correspondence to check this situation out.

10 It doesn't look good. I drove by.  
11 I don't know all the ordinances. I don't know  
12 what is legal and what's not. But it just  
13 doesn't look right. And usually when it  
14 doesn't look like, it might not be. So that is  
15 all I have. Thank you.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. Thank you,  
17 Councilman McAndrew. Dr. Rothchild, any  
18 motions or comments today?

19 DR. ROTHCHILD: No, I don't have any  
20 motions or comments. Thank you.

21 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. Thank you.  
22 And, Councilman Donahue, any motions or  
23 comments?

24 MR. DONAHUE: I have nothing at this  
25 time. Thank you.

1                   MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. Thank you. I  
2                   just have a few things. So last week I did  
3                   make a request for the City administration to  
4                   respond to several Act 47 recommendations that  
5                   were in our Recovery Plan. So we are going to  
6                   send those out if they haven't been sent out  
7                   already.

8                   And I hope to get a response, you  
9                   know, prior to the end of the month. These are  
10                  all things that had been in the Recovery Plan  
11                  now for quite a few years. And I'm hoping that  
12                  we can get them done before we exit Act 47.  
13                  You know, most of the ones that have not been  
14                  completed yet are ones that I think are very  
15                  important to the City like a debt management  
16                  policy and some other things that we've been  
17                  harping on now for the last few years.

18                  The second thing is I mentioned this  
19                  in the caucus. I just want to mention again in  
20                  the regular meeting is the -- if we can ask  
21                  just for an update and when we might receive  
22                  the results of the employee tax and fee status.  
23                  A few months ago the Mayor and her  
24                  administration announced that they were  
25                  doing -- or giving employees a chance to come

1 forward and pay anything that was outstanding  
2 in terms of garbage fees and real estate taxes  
3 and things like that.

4 And Miss Schumacher had asked for an  
5 update. So if we could just find out when we  
6 might receive that. And also on top of that  
7 maybe I think there -- I believe there was  
8 going to be a residency audit that was going to  
9 be performed with City employees. So if we  
10 could check on that as well.

11 And finally, I'd like to make a  
12 motion at this time to have Solicitor Hayes  
13 draft a resolution in support of renaming  
14 Wyoming Avenue to Joseph R. Biden Boulevard  
15 after our native son and the 46th President of  
16 the United States, Joe Biden and also forming a  
17 committee to aid in the process.

18 MR. DONAHUE: Second.

19 MR. MCANDREW: Second.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: On the question? On  
21 the question, as we all know, it's been  
22 reported widely that president-elect who's  
23 going to be sworn in tomorrow was raised in  
24 Scranton for the first 10 or so years of his  
25 life. And tomorrow he's going to be

1           inaugurated as the 46th President of the United  
2           States and, you know, the most powerful person  
3           in the world.

4                     And the way that he handles himself  
5           and conducts himself with grace, kindness and  
6           compassion I think is a great reflection on our  
7           city, not only on our city but on our people as  
8           well. He's really turned the attention of this  
9           whole nation and really in some respects the  
10          world on the City of Scranton.

11                    And it has been tremendously  
12          positive for us. So whether you are -- no  
13          matter where you fall in the political  
14          spectrum, just the fact that we have an  
15          individual who was born here, who never forgot  
16          where he came from, who has a lot friends that  
17          are still here and who had such an impact on  
18          the City of Scranton, the fact that he's going  
19          to be sworn in tomorrow as President of the  
20          United States is a really, really great thing  
21          for our City.

22                    And it's great thing for our nation.  
23          So I think, you know, this will go a long way  
24          in honoring that. And I think it makes a lot  
25          of sense. And as I mentioned in the caucus



1           tonight when we were talking about this, I do  
2           think we need to form a committee to work  
3           through the details, post office changes and  
4           other things that would most likely come along  
5           with this.

6                       And as I said, the rationale behind  
7           Wyoming Avenue, I think it's a natural choice  
8           just because it's not currently named after a  
9           president. And I don't believe there's any  
10          major significance that anyone would object to  
11          as far as I know. So Kevin is going to  
12          research that.

13                      And I just want to thank everybody  
14          for supporting it. And anyone else on the  
15          question? Okay. All those in favor of the  
16          motion signify by saying aye.

17                      MR. SCHUSTER: Aye.

18                      MR. MCANDREW: Aye.

19                      MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

20                      DR. ROTHCHILD: Aye.

21                      MR. GAUGHAN: Aye. Opposed? The  
22          ayes have it and so moved. I also just wanted  
23          to thank again Shamus Weir who is the  
24          Chairperson of the Ballina Council who was here  
25          tonight in our caucus if anybody who's watching

1           now missed that.

2                       He was here not only to celebrate  
3           the sister city that we have between -- sister  
4           city arrangement that we have between Ballina  
5           and the City of Scranton, but also the fact  
6           that Joe Biden has his roots as well, not only  
7           in Scranton but in Ballina a small town called  
8           Knockmore.

9                       So, you know, in the City of  
10          Scranton as I mentioned when we were speaking  
11          with that gentleman earlier tonight, you can't  
12          walk too far in the City without bumping into  
13          someone who is -- has Irish ancestry and can  
14          trace their roots back to County Mayo and back  
15          to Ballina.

16                      My own family included, my  
17          great-grandparents on both sides are from  
18          County Mayo. And as I mentioned, immigrants  
19          built the City, the Irish, the Polish, the  
20          Germans, the Italians and so on.

21                      And that attitude of getting knocked  
22          down and getting back up and the fact that they  
23          continue to have hope which we need right now  
24          in the midst of this pandemic, I think it  
25          speaks a lot about not only our city, not only

1 County Mayo in Ireland but about that  
2 connection that has endured for a very long  
3 time and really was kind of set in stone by  
4 Mayor Connors back in 1991.

5 So again, I want to thank Mr. Weir  
6 for coming to our caucus tonight. And I am  
7 hoping that that connection between Scranton  
8 and County Mayo can stay alive for generations  
9 to come because as I said earlier in doing  
10 that, we remember those that came before us,  
11 those that fought very hard for our city, those  
12 who built our city to gain a better life for  
13 themselves and their children. And that's all  
14 I have. Mrs. Reed?

15 MS. REED: Thank you. 5-B. FOR  
16 INTRODUCTION – AN ORDINANCE – AMENDING FILE OF  
17 THE COUNCIL NO. 78, 2019, AN ORDINANCE (AS  
18 AMENDED) ENTITLED “GENERAL CITY  
19 OPERATING BUDGET 2020” BY TRANSFERRING  
20 \$34,000.00 FROM ACCOUNT NO. 01.401.13090.4299  
21 NON-DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURES TO CONTINGENCY TO  
22 THE ACCOUNT NUMBERS LISTED BELOW TO PROVIDE  
23 SUFFICIENT FUNDING FOR PAYMENT OF FINANCIAL  
24 OBLIGATIONS THROUGH THE 2020 BUDGET PERIOD.

25 MR. GAUGHAN: At this time I'll

1           entertain a motion that Item 5-B be introduced  
2           into its proper committee.

3                     MR. DONAHUE:   So moved.

4                     MR. SCHUSTER:   Second.

5                     MR. MCANDREW:   Second.

6                     MR. GAUGHAN:   On the question?   On  
7           the question, this was discussed in caucus but  
8           just to make sure it gets on the official  
9           record, Mrs. Reed provided an explanation to us  
10          earlier in the caucus and generally I think  
11          what it boiled down to was there was the  
12          increased costs due to the pandemic and due to  
13          Council trying to be as transparent as possible  
14          and making sure the public was aware of our  
15          meetings and advertising that in the newspaper.

16                    So those costs did go up this year.  
17          And we're simply transferring money from the  
18          contingency account to cover those costs.  
19          Anyone else on the question?   All those in  
20          favor of introduction signify by saying aye.

21                    MR. SCHUSTER:   Aye.

22                    MR. MCANDREW:   Aye.

23                    MR. DONAHUE:   Aye.

24                    DR. ROTHCHILD:   Aye.

25                    MR. GAUGHAN:   Aye.   Opposed?   The

1           ayes have it and so moved.

2                       MS. REED: 5-C. FOR INTRODUCTION -  
3           AN ORDINANCE - AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL  
4           NO. 78, 2019, AN ORDINANCE (AS AMENDED)  
5           ENTITLED "GENERAL CITY OPERATING BUDGET 2020"  
6           BY TRANSFERRING \$4,280.00 FROM ACCOUNT  
7           NO. 01.051.00082.4448 DEPARTMENT OF LICENSE &  
8           INSPECTIONS BUREAU OF BUILDINGS PAWC-WATER TO  
9           ACCOUNT NO.01.401.10120.4299 (NON-DEPARTMENTAL)  
10          ST CATS & DOGS TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT FUNDING  
11          FOR PAYMENT OF ST CATS & DOGS SPAY AND NEUTER  
12          INVOICES THROUGH THE 2020 BUDGET PERIOD.

13                   MR. GAUGHAN: At this time I'll  
14          entertain a motion that Item 5-C be introduced  
15          into its proper committee.

16                   DR. ROTHCHILD: So moved.

17                   MR. DONAHUE: So moved.

18                   MR. SCHUSTER: Second.

19                   MR. GAUGHAN: On the question? All  
20          those in favor of introduction signify by  
21          saying aye.

22                   MR. SCHUSTER: Aye.

23                   MR. MCANDREW: Aye.

24                   MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

25                   DR. ROTHCHILD: Aye.

1 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye. Opposed? The  
2 ayes have it and so moved.

3 MS. REED: 5-D. FOR INTRODUCTION -  
4 AN ORDINANCE - AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL  
5 NO. 6, 2020, AS AMENDED BY FILE OF THE COUNCIL  
6 NO.59, 2019, ENTITLED "AN ORDINANCE AMENDING  
7 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 17, 1994 ENTITLED "AN  
8 ORDINANCE (AS AMENDED) AUTHORIZING THE  
9 GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON TO ENACT  
10 A WASTE DISPOSAL AND COLLECTION FEE FOR THE  
11 PURPOSE OF RAISING REVENUE TO COVER THE WASTE  
12 DISPOSAL AND COLLECTION COSTS INCURRED BY  
13 THE CITY OF SCRANTON FOR THE DISPOSAL OF  
14 REFUSE", BY IMPOSING A WASTE DISPOSAL AND  
15 COLLECTION FEE OF \$300.00 FOR CALENDAR YEAR  
16 2020 AND THE SAME SHALL REMAIN IN FULL FORCE  
17 AND EFFECT ANNUALLY THEREAFTER" TO PROVIDE AN  
18 EXTENSION OF THE DEADLINE TO PAY 2020 REFUSE  
19 FEES UNTIL MARCH 31, 2021 DUE TO THE ECONOMIC  
20 HARDSHIPS CAUSED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

21 MR. GAUGHAN: At this time I'll  
22 entertain a motion that Item 5-D be introduced  
23 into its proper committee.

24 MR. DONAHUE: So moved.

25 MR. SCHUSTER: Second.

1                   MR. GAUGHAN: On the question? On  
2 the question, I'm going to be in favor of this  
3 legislation. I think anyone who's been  
4 following along with the last year and a half  
5 of this nightmare with the pandemic has  
6 understood that people are really, really  
7 suffering.

8                   People have lost their jobs.  
9 They're not getting the same amount of income  
10 that they once had. Children are out of school  
11 and at home. People are trying to work from  
12 home. It's just been a real mess and a real  
13 hardship on people.

14                  So this legislation allows people  
15 who would have been delinquent on refuse bills  
16 in 2020 to pay that by February 28th of this  
17 year and to, you know, avoid the penalty which  
18 would have been -- usually be 12 percent of the  
19 outstanding balance.

20                  And I think that's fair. I really  
21 do. I think that's fair. This would also  
22 reimburse the penalty to those who paid after  
23 September 30th and that will be up to February  
24 28th. Now, I do have one question and that is,  
25 Mrs. Reed, if you could check with the City

1           Treasurer if anyone has been hired yet in that  
2           constituent services position in the  
3           Treasurer's Office.

4                     It's my understanding that right now  
5           I believe there is only one employee besides  
6           the Treasurer herself. And I'm sorry, that's  
7           March 31st, not February 28th. But so if we  
8           could find out about the -- if anyone has  
9           filled in that position yet, number one.

10                    And number two, I think this -- we  
11           can maybe talk about the discussion that we  
12           were having back in December about the grace  
13           period. I want to see a larger grace period  
14           when we're talking about the delinquent refuse  
15           fees. But that's a conversation I think when  
16           we get to the refuse -- the delinquent refuse  
17           collector, which hopefully will be coming up in  
18           the next week or two.

19                    But all in all, I do support this  
20           legislation. I think it's fair for people.  
21           And I think it will help people who have been  
22           affected negatively by the pandemic. Anyone  
23           else on the question?

24                    MR. SCHUSTER: Yeah, while we're on  
25           the question with this, I know we got some



1 e-mails from the Single Tax Office regarding  
2 the City and the communications there. Do we  
3 know if there was any updates that the City was  
4 communicating with the Tax Office?

5 MR. GAUGHAN: What do you mean?

6 MR. SCHUSTER: Wasn't there an  
7 e-mail out that the Tax Office had reached out  
8 to the City but they hadn't heard back yet?

9 MR. GAUGHAN: I don't know off the  
10 top of my head. I'd have to go back and look.  
11 There might have been. I don't have it in  
12 front of me though.

13 MR. SCHUSTER: Okay. Yeah, I don't  
14 have it in front of me either. It was just  
15 something I remembered. I'll have to take a  
16 look too and maybe I'll send an e-mail over to  
17 see if we can get an update as to whether  
18 they're communicating with each other.

19 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. Very good.  
20 Anyone else on the question? All right. All  
21 those in favor of introduction signify by  
22 saying aye.

23 MR. SCHUSTER: Aye.

24 MR. MCANDREW: Aye.

25 MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

1 DR. ROTHCHILD: Aye.

2 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye. Opposed? The  
3 ayes have it and so moved.

4 MS. REED: 5-E. FOR INTRODUCTION -  
5 AN ORDINANCE - AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL  
6 NO. 47, 2000, AN ORDINANCE, AS AMENDED BY FILE  
7 OF THE COUNCIL NO. 8, 1999 ENTITLED "AN  
8 ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING FEES TO BE  
9 IMPOSED FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF EMERGENCY  
10 SERVICES BY THE CITY OF SCRANTON FIRE  
11 DEPARTMENT; AUTHORIZING THE ADMINISTRATION AND  
12 ENFORCEMENT OF SAID FEES; AND PRESCRIBING  
13 PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS," BY UPDATING THE FEE  
14 SCHEDULE CONTAINED IN SECTION 4 THEREOF.

15 MR. GAUGHAN: At this time I'll  
16 entertain a motion that Item 5-E be introduced  
17 into its proper committee.

18 MR. DONAHUE: So moved.

19 MR. SCHUSTER: Second.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: On the question? On  
21 the question, all this legislation is doing is  
22 really just updating a billing structure that's  
23 about 20 years old. This is a recommendation  
24 from the Fire Department and Fire Chief Judge,  
25 which I agree with.

1           The one thing I mentioned this is in  
2           the caucus but just to get it on the record  
3           again, this -- all of this is kind of managed  
4           by a vendor company called Pennsylvania Fire  
5           Recovery. The insurance is billed only and the  
6           City accepts the insurance payment.

7           If there's a balance, the company  
8           attempts to recover from the responsible party.  
9           If the City -- if the person is a City  
10          resident, the billing company does not bill the  
11          balance. So nothing is changing on the billing  
12          end other than the fee structure.

13          So everything that was previously  
14          approved will stay intact. And that comes from  
15          Fire Chief Judge. So anyone else on the  
16          question? All those in favor of introduction  
17          signify by saying aye.

18                 MR. SCHUSTER: Aye.

19                 MR. MCANDREW: Aye.

20                 MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

21                 DR. ROTHCHILD: Aye.

22                 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye. Opposed? The  
23          ayes have it and so moved.

24                 MS. REED: SIXTH ORDER. 6-A.

25          READING BY TITLE - FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 45,

1           2021 - AN ORDINANCE - AMENDING FILE OF THE  
2           COUNCIL NO. 78, 2019, AN ORDINANCE (AS AMENDED)  
3           ENTITLED "GENERAL CITY OPERATING BUDGET  
4           2020" BY TRANSFERRING \$185,000.00 FROM ACCOUNT  
5           NO. 01.401.13090.4299 (NON-DEPARTMENTAL  
6           OPERATING EXPENSES - CONTINGENCY) TO ACCOUNT  
7           NO. 01.060.00000.4201 (LAW DEPARTMENT  
8           PROFESSIONAL SERVICES) TO PROVIDE FUNDING TO  
9           COVER VARIOUS ATTORNEY FEES.

10                   MR. GAUGHAN: You've heard reading  
11           by title of Item 6-A. What is your pleasure?

12                   MR. DONAHUE: I move that Item 6-A  
13           pass reading by title.

14                   MR. MCANDREW: Second.

15                   MR. GAUGHAN: On the question? On  
16           the question, I did ask for a breakdown of the  
17           attorneys' fees especially in light of the fact  
18           that we're going over budget by nearly  
19           \$200,000. We did not receive that yet.

20                   But, Mrs. Reed, if we don't receive  
21           that by Friday afternoon, then I'll make a  
22           motion next week to ask someone to make a  
23           motion to table this. I think we need, you  
24           know, time to review that before final passage.  
25           Okay? Anyone else on the question? All those

1 in favor signify by saying aye.

2 MR. SCHUSTER: Aye.

3 MR. MCANDREW: Aye.

4 MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

5 DR. ROTHCHILD: Aye.

6 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye. Opposed? The  
7 ayes have it and so moved.

8 MS. REED: SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A. FOR  
9 CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES - FOR  
10 ADOPTION - FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 44, 2021 -  
11 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE  
12 OFFICIALS OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON TO ENTER  
13 INTO A LEASE AGREEMENT WITH THE KEYSER VALLEY  
14 CITIZENS ASSOCIATION, INC. FOR USE OF THE  
15 PREMISES COMMONLY KNOWN AS KEYSER VALLEY  
16 COMMUNITY CENTER LOCATED AT 101 NORTH KEYSER  
17 AVENUE, SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA 18504 FOR A  
18 THREE-YEAR PERIOD COMMENCING JANUARY 1, 2021  
19 AND ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2023.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: As Chairperson for the  
21 Committee on Rules, I recommend final passage  
22 of Item 7-A.

23 MR. SCHUSTER: Second.

24 MR. GAUGHAN: On the question? Roll  
25 call, please.

1 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Schuster.

2 MR SCHUSTER: Yes.

3 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McAndrew.

4 MR. MCANDREW: Yes.

5 MS. CARRERA: Dr. Rothchild.

6 DR. ROTHCHILD: Yes.

7 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

8 MR. DONAHUE: Yes.

9 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

10 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes. I hereby declare  
11 Item 7-A legally and lawfully adopted.

12 MS. REED: EIGHTH ORDER. Old  
13 Business. Nothing at this time.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Mrs. Reed.  
15 If there is no further business, I'll entertain  
16 a motion to adjourn.

17 MR. MCANDREW: Motion to adjourn.

18 MR. GAUGHAN: This meeting is  
19 adjourned. Thank you everyone. Have a good  
20 night. Stay safe. See you next week.

21 MR. MCANDREW: Bye-bye.

22

23

24

25

C E R T I F I C A T E

I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence are contained fully and accurately in the notes taken by me of the above-cause and that this copy is a correct transcript of the same to the best of my ability.

---

Maria McCool, RPR  
Official Court Reporter

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